



## **Dart Sailability Group Policy and Procedures for the Safeguarding of Adults at Risk and Children**

July 2023

### **INTRODUCTION**

This document defines Dart Sailability's policy for Safeguarding both Adults at Risk and Children and provides details of how this policy will be implemented and guidance for members on the application of the policy.

"Adults at Risk" are defined by the Care Act 2014 as anyone aged 18 or over, who is in need of care or support, and who because of those needs is unable to safeguard themselves at all times.

For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child.

All members of DSG should be aware of this policy and associated procedures.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Dart Sailability Group (DSG) is committed to safeguarding adults at risk, taking part in its activities, from physical, sexual, psychological, financial or discriminatory abuse or neglect. We recognise that everyone, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

DSG is committed to safeguarding children taking part in its activities from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the child are paramount and that any child, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

DSG takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures and training, it offers a safe environment to adults at risk participating in its activities. All participants will be treated with dignity and respect.

DSG takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures and training, it offers a safe and fun environment to children taking part in its events and activities.

All members and volunteers should be aware of the policy.

## **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Designated Person (Welfare Officer)**

Dart Sailability Group will appoint a dedicated Welfare Officer.

Although everyone has a role to play in ensuring that participants are safe, the Welfare Officer is the designated person with specific responsibility for implementing the policy, and acts as the point of contact to receive information and advice from the RYA.

The Welfare Officer's general terms of reference include:

- Maintaining an up-to-date policy and procedures, compatible with the RYA's.
- Ensuring that relevant staff and/or volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures, including implementing safe recruitment procedures.
- Advising the management committee on safeguarding issues.
- Maintaining contact details for local Adult Social Care Services.

If there is a concern, the Welfare Officer would:

- Be the first point of contact for any concerns or allegations from adults at risk, carers or others, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken, in line with the organisation's procedures and in conjunction with the Principal.
- Keep the RYA informed as necessary

Everyone in the organisation should know who the Welfare Officer is and how to contact them.

### **DSG Welfare Officer**

The DSG Welfare Officer is: Clare Heasman (previously Hannon),  
[welfaresec@dartsailability.org](mailto:welfaresec@dartsailability.org), [hannon.clare@yahoo.com](mailto:hannon.clare@yahoo.com), mob. 07837 044082

### **RYA designated person**

The RYA's Safeguarding and Equality Manager can be contacted on 023 8060 4104, or E-mail [safeguarding@rya.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk)

## **VOLUNTEERS**

All DSG volunteers will be asked to apply for an enhanced DBS certificate. This will be processed by the DBS Coordinator for all new volunteers who commence regular attendance.

The Welfare Officer and those regularly instructing, coaching or supervising adults at risk and/or children, will also be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure.

Volunteers may not provide personal care. This must be carried out by family members or carers.

## **CONCERNS**

Anyone who is concerned about the welfare of an adult, either outside the sport or within DSG, should inform the Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Welfare Officer will follow procedures supplied by the RYA.

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's Child Protection should inform the Welfare Officer or the Principal immediately or if they are not available, the Officer of the Day. All conversation is to be treated in the strictest confidence. The Welfare Secretary will follow the procedures set out in the Royal Yacht Association's guidelines.

Any member of Dart Sailability failing to comply with this Safeguarding Policy and associated Codes of Conduct may be warned by DSG or if necessary, have their membership removed: certain actions might require reporting to the police.

### ***Good Practice Guide (Adults at Risk)***

#### **Good Practice for all Volunteers, Members and Instructors**

All members of DSG should follow the good practice guide and agree to abide by the DSG Code of Conduct and the RYA Racing Charter contained in the Racing Rules of Sailing. Those working or volunteering with young people should be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse.

#### **for Instructors, Coaches and Volunteers working with Adults at Risk**

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with adults at risk.

- Always communicate clearly, in whatever way best suits the individual, and check their understanding and expectations
- Always try to work in an open environment in view of others
- Avoid spending any significant time working with adults at risk in isolation
- Do not take an adult at risk alone in a car, however short the journey, unless you are certain that the individual has the capacity to decide to accept a lift
- Do not take an adult at risk to your home as part of your organisation's activity
- Where any of these is unavoidable, ensure that it only occurs with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the person's carers
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual
- If you need to help someone with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid or provide physical assistance or support, make sure you are in full view of others
- Take great care with communications via mobile phone, e-mail or social media that might be misunderstood or shared inappropriately. In general, only send group communications about organisational matters using these methods. If it's essential to send an individual message to a person who has a learning disability or other impairment that might affect their understanding, copy it to their carer.

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games or activities
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- use inappropriate language
- make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- fail to respond to an allegation made by an adult at risk; always act
- do things of a personal nature that the person can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature to help someone with a physical or learning disability. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of both the individual (where possible) and their carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, if the individual lacks the capacity to give consent, carers should be fully informed. In such situations it is important to ensure that anyone present is sensitive to the individual and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

## ***Culture***

It is important to develop a culture within DSG where both children and adults feel able to raise concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously, treated confidentially and will not make the situation worse for themselves or others.

Some members may be more vulnerable to abuse or find it more difficult to express their concerns. For example, a disabled person who relies on a carer to help them

get changed may worry that they won't be able to sail any more if they report the carer. A child who has experienced racism may find it difficult to trust an adult from a different ethnic background.

## **Good Practice Guide for the Protection of Children**

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with children and young people.

- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey
- Do not take children to your home as part of your organisation's activity
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the child's parents
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child
- If a child is having difficulty with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid, ask them to ask a friend to help if at all possible
- If you do have to help a child, make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult
- Restrict communications with young people via mobile phone, e-mail or social media to group communications about organisational matters. If it's essential to send an individual message, copy it to the child's parent or carer.

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use such language yourself when with children
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- fail to respond to an allegation made by a child
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents/carers should be informed as soon as possible. In such situations,

it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the child and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

### ***Changing Rooms and Showers***

There are no Changing Rooms or Showers available at Dartside Quay facility. There are male, female and disabled toilet facilities available. If assistance needs to be given it should be by the carer or parent. If in an emergency DSG volunteer help is needed it should be two adults and of the same sex as the child.

### ***Photography.***

DSG will seek written consent from the child and their parents/carers before taking photos or video at an event or training session or publishing such images. Parents should only take photographs or video of their own children. If DSG publishes images of children, no identifying information other than names will be included. Any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or the inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Welfare Secretary.

### ***First Aid and Medical Treatment***

First Aid is part of your normal duty of care. Obtain consent if medication or medical treatment is required in the absence of the parent/carers unless there is an immediate threat to life.

### ***Communication***

When working with children and young people you are advised to:

- avoid using over-familiar language in any written correspondence and try to copy in the child's parent/carers
- only communicate regarding organisational matters, not for social or personal contact

Similar care should be used when using social media. It is recommended that you

- do not allow young sailors to follow or be friends with your personal account
- set your privacy settings as high as possible on your personal account
- challenge the way that young sailors post or comment to you or others on social media if it is inappropriate. Educate young sailors about the boundaries between them and their Coach or Instructor

### ***Safeguarding Training***

Organisations should ensure that all volunteers working with children have undertaken training appropriate to their role. For DSG this is achieved during the induction and awareness training.

## What is Child Abuse? And How to Recognise it

This is a guide recommended by the RYA, for use by affiliated Training Centres, based on the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2013.

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. It refers to damage done to a child's physical or mental health. Child abuse can take many forms:

**Physical abuse** may involve adults or other children inflicting physical harm:

- by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating
- giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs
- in sport situations, physical abuse might also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- respond to a child's basic emotional needs
- neglect in a sailing situation might occur if an instructor or coach fails to ensure that children are safe, or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury

**Sexual abuse** involves an individual (male, female or another child) forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, to gratify their own sexual needs. The activities may involve:

- physical contact (e.g. Kissing, touching, masturbation, rape or oral sex)
- involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images
- encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- sport situations which involve physical contact (e.g. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power over young people.

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. it may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- imposing expectations which are beyond the child's age or developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- allowing a child to see or hear the ill-treatment of another person
- serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- the exploitation or corruption of children
- emotional abuse in sport might also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or pressure to perform at a level that the child cannot realistically be expected to achieve

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child.

**Bullying** may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated or sustained over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another young person. Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

DSG will not tolerate any form of bullying, which is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. It may include behaviour that is Emotional, Physical, Racist, Homophobic, Sexual or Verbally unacceptable. In all cases, it should be reported and will be investigated.

### **Recognising Abuse**

It is not always easy, even for the most experienced carers, to spot when a child has been abused. However, some of the more typical symptoms, which should trigger your suspicions, would include:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- sexually explicit language or actions
- a sudden change in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- a change observed over a long period of time (e.g. the child losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt)
- a general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially those with whom a close relationship would be expected



- an unexpected reaction to normal physical contact
- difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

It is important to note that a child could be displaying some or all of these signs, or behaving in a way which is worrying, without this necessarily meaning that the child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, but you may just feel that something is wrong. If you have noticed a change in the child's behaviour, first talk to the parents or carers. It may be that something has happened, such as a bereavement, which has caused the child to be unhappy.

***If you are concerned***

If there are concerns about sexual abuse or violence in the home, talking to the parents or carers might put the child at greater risk. If you cannot talk to the parents/carers, consult DSG's Welfare Officer or the person in charge of the session. It is this person's responsibility to make the decision to contact the RYA Safeguarding team, Children's Social Care Services or the Police. It is NOT their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, BUT it is their responsibility to act on your concerns.

